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ANNOUNCER: "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers"

ORCHESTRA: QUARTET: RANGER SONG

ANNOUNCER:

And now for our trip to the National Forest and a look-in on our old friend Ranger Jim Robbins. Our 150 National Forests, located in 37 States and two territories, are being administered by the United States Forest Service on the principle of "conservation by wise use" -- and that means they are open to the use and enjoyment of the people of the United States, but not to abuse. The resources are being managed on a permanent and continuing basis. Along with the recreational facilities, the wildlife, the watershed protection values, and the forage on the ranges, the National Forests are growing billions of feet of timber -- a reservoir of timber wealth protected and maintained in the interest of national welfare. Any cutting of timber in the National Forests must therefore be done under Forest Service supervision, in such a way as to insure future growth from the land, and to prevent damage to watersheds.

Well, here's Jim Robbins busy at his desk in the little office of the Pine Cone Ranger Station. Let's see what's going on --

JIM: Hmm - What time's it getting to be, Bess?

BESS: It's a little after one, Jim. Should I wait lunch on Jerry any longer?

JIM: Oh, I guess he'll be in directly, Bess. He was just making a short trip over in the North Fork this morning.

BESS: Well, we can wait a few minutes longer. My, he's getting to be as bad as you are about being late for meals.

JIM: Something must've held him up, Bess. You never can tell what you're going to run into on this job.

BESS: No, I guess not.

JIM: Ho hum - it's sure a swell day Bess, ain't it? Just my luck to have to stay humped over the desk all day on a day like this.

BESS: Well, you're out in the field enough. I guess a day in the office now and then won't hurt you so much.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) No, I s'pose not. -- Here comes Jerry now.

BESS: Yes, that's Jerry.

(SOUND OF DOOR)

JERRY: (COMING IN) Howdy, folks. -- Sorry I was so late getting back, Mrs. Robbins, but I ran onto a timber trespass case.

JIM: Timber trespass?

JERRY: Yeah. You know that nice piece of timber about a half mile up that new truck trail from the North Fork road?

JIM: Yeah?

JERRY: Well, somebody's been cutting in there. We haven't issued any cutting permits in there.

JIM: Nope. That's a timber trespass all right. -- How much cutting have they done?

JERRY: Not so awful much, so far - less than an acre, I guess. But they sure messed things up where they did cut

JIM: See any evidence that might help us find who did it?

JERRY: There's some auto tire tracks that might help. I made a sketch of 'em, but I thought I'd better go back with the camera this afternoon and get a photograph.

JIM: Yep. Good idea. Maybe I'd better go along, too. I can finish up this report tonight

BESS: You wanted to get outside today. It sounds like you've found an excuse already.

JIM: (CHUCKLING) Yep. Pretty good one, too. Somebody's been stealing Uncle Sam's timber, Bess, and it's our job to find out who.

BESS: I hope you can find them, Jim.

JIM: We'll do our best. -- Come on, Jerry. We'll get a bit to eat, and go right up there

(INTERVAL - MUSIC)

JIM: Did you get a good photograph of those tire tracks, Jerry?

JERRY: Yeah. I took three or four of 'em, so's to be sure and get a good one.

JIM: That's good.

JERRY: It looks like it was a truck and trailer, Jim. I followed the tracks down the trail a ways, and at every turn there's an extra track, so there must've been a trailer.

JIM: Yep. They're the only fresh tracks in here, aren't they?

JERRY: Yeah. The only ones since the last rain.

JIM: That helps.

JERRY: Yeah. And they're clear as day, too. -- Look - here in this wet place. You can see all the tread, and there's a worn place in the right tire - see? And there's a stone cut -- see? It's four and a quarter inches from the edge of the worn place. I measured it, already.

JIM: That's right.

JERRY: The left tire's newer than the right, see.

JIM: Uh huh -- He backed in here, didn't he?

JERRY: Yeah. Here's where he loaded -- Well, all we gotta do now is find out who all owns a truck and trailer around this part of the country, and then take a look at the tires.

JIM: That'll help locate our man, I reckon. The garage man down in Winding Creek can probably tell us just about everyone that has a trailer around here.

JERRY: Yeah -- We might as well get going, huh, Jim?

JIM: There's one more thing I want, Jerry. Get that cross-cut saw out of the pick-up, will you?

JERRY: (GOING OFF) Sure. What you going to do with it, Jim?

JIM: Well, I've been looking around a little - bring the saw over here, Jerry --

JERRY: (OFF) Okay. (COMING UP) Here you are, Jim. What do you want to do?

JIM: See this oak stump here?

JERRY: Yeah.

JIM: Looks like it was one of the last one's cut, doesn't it?

JERRY: Yeah. It's fresh cut, all right. Must've been cut last night.

JIM: Well, there's only two oak stumps fresh cut around here. All the rest are other kinds of trees.

JERRY: There wasn't much oak in here, that's true.

JIM: Well, this stump here - see? There's two knots where it was cut through - and there's three sections of rot - see?

JERRY: Yeah.

JIM: And then there's these bug holes. -- Suppose we saw off a section of this stump, Jerry. It might come in handy.

JERRY: Okay. Grab ahold the other end.

(SOUND OF SAWING -- FADEOUT)

(INTERVAL - MUSIC)

JIM: You got a list of people that have trailers, did you, Jerry?

JERRY: Yeah. Gosh, about half the people in the country must have 'em, Jim. If we've gotta go around and look at all of 'em we might as well take a week off.

JIM: Well, maybe we won't have to. Might play a hunch first or all.

JERRY: Hunch? What hunch?

JIM: Let's see who you've got on the list -- Hmm. Link Taggart - he's pretty busy with his livestock business. - Stan Wilson - he's one of our best cooperators - I wouldn't be inclined to suspect him. -- Mike Bundy -- hmm. -- Let's hop in the pick-up and go over and see Mike Bundy.

JERRY: All right. Why him?

JIM: Just a hunch. Mike's been behaving himself pretty well the last year or so, but he's been a bad actor before. Anyhow, we'll see. --

(INTERVAL - MUSIC)

FADE IN SOUND OF AUTOMOBILE

JERRY: Here's Mike Bundy's place, Jim.

JIM: Yep.

JERRY: Yeah, there's the trailer right out there by the road.

JIM: Pull up off the road here, Jerry, and we'll have a look at it.

JERRY: Okay.

(SOUND OF AUTO STOPS)

JIM: (CALLS) Hello there, Bundy.

BUNDY: (OFF - SURLY) What you fellers doin' around here?

JIM: Just stopping by. Sort of interested in that trailer of yours.

BUNDY: Yeah?

JIM: Uh huh. Pretty nice trailer, ain't it? Had it long?

BUNDY: I reckon 'taint none of yer bizness how long I've had 'er.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Nope, I guess not. -- How's the tires on 'er?

BUNDY: Yuh ain't figgerin' to buy 'er, are yuh?

JIM: I dunno, Bundy I don't believe so. -- Hmm. Right tire's kinda worn a little, ain't it?

BUNDY: 'Taint worn so bad.

JIM: Nope. Not so bad -- There's a worn place -- see, Jerry?

JERRY: Yeah. And there's the cut place, just about four inches from it. That's the one all right, Jim!

JIM: Yep. (SERIOUSLY) Bundy, somebody's been stealing timber up on the North Fork I was wondering if you knew anything about it?

BUNDY: (SUFLY) Huh? Stealin' timber? I don't know nothin' about it.

JIM: No? Well, Bundy, we took a photograph of some tire tracks this afternoon up there on that new truck trail, that's going to show that your trailer was up there.

BUNDY: Yeah? Mebbe I was an' mebbe I wasn't.

JIM: Uh huh. The tracks match up with your tires as nice as you please.

BUNDY: Yeah? Well, mebbe I was up in there. It's a public road, ain't it?

JIM: Yep. It amounts to that. The Forest Service has opened it to the public for any legitimate travel.

BUNDY: Well, s'posing I was up there. That don't prove nothin'.

JIM: Maybe not, Bundy. I see you've got a pile of fresh cut wood out back there. I wonder where that came from?

BUNDY: Huh? I reckon that's my bizness, where it come from

JIM: Yep, I guess it is. I don't s'pose you'd mind if we took a look at it?

BUNDY: Huh? I s'pose yer gonna say that wood come from yer forest.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) I don't know, Bundy. I s'pect I know my forest pretty well, but I can't say I'd recognize every tree.

BUNDY: Well, go ahead an' look at 'er if yuh wanta. I don't know nothin' about no timber stealin', an' yuh can't prove nothin'.

JIM: All right. We'll just have a look. Come on, Jerry. (PAUSE)
Hmm. About three cords in the pile, I'd say.

JERRY: Yeah, just about.

JIM: See any oak in there?

JERRY: Let's see. -- Yeah, here's a piece of oak.

JIM: Hmm. Been split up, ain't it?

JERRY: Yeah. -- Here's another piece, Jim.

JIM: Yep. That looks like it might be a piece from a butt log. --
Hmm. -- I guess what we better do is find all the sections split from that log, Jerry.

JERRY: Gosh, they're scattered all through the pile, Jim.

JIM: Yeah, I know, -- it'll take some time, I guess. But we'd better do it.

JERRY: All right. Here goes.

(INTERVAL - MUSIC)

JERRY: There, that's all of 'em, I guess, Jim.

JIM: Eight sections, huh?

JERRY: Yeah, the log was split up into eight sections.

JIM: Let's see how they fit together.

JERRY: All right. -- Here, these two match. -- And this one fits here.

JIM: Yep. These two'll make another quarter.

JERRY: She goes together perfect, Jim!

JIM: Yep. Now, if we can get a piece of wire to hold 'em together, we'll have our log reconstructed.

JERRY: Here's a piece of wire - right here by the fence.

JIM: Fine -- Now, wrap 'er around while I hold the pieces together. -- There. -- Hmm. Look at the butt end, Jerry. There's the two knots, and three sections of rot.

JERRY: Yeah, that's the log, all right!

JIM: Yep. (CALLS) Hey, Bundy --

BUNDY: (OFF) Yeah?

JIM: Come here a minute, will you?

BUNDY: (COMING UP) I tell yuh yuh can't prove nothin' about that there wood.

JIM: No? This log here's kind of interesting, though, Bundy. See? We put it together again.

BUNDY: Yeah? What about it?

JIM: Jerry, go get that stump section out of the pick-up, will you?

JERRY: (GOING OFF) You bet.

BUNDY: I tell yuh I don't know nothin' about no timber stealin'.

JIM: Bundy, where were you figuring to sell this wood? Down in Willow Glen?

BUNDY: I reckon that's my business.

JIM: You know you could have got a legitimate permit from us to cut fire wood on the Forest. We've got plenty of places where firewood can be cut without doing any damage to the forest.

BUNDY: Yeah?

JIM: Yep. But it's our job to see that it's cut right. We can't redeem our responsibility to maintain watershed protection and public values in recreation and wildlife and all, if we allow timber to be cut indiscriminately. Stealing timber doesn't go, Bundy.

BUNDY: I tell yuh I don't know nothin' about it.

JIM: No?

JERRY: (COMING UP) Here's the log section, Jim.

JIM. Thanks, Jerry. -- Look here, Bundy. See this cross section here? We cut this off of one of the stumps up there in the North Fork this afternoon. -- See here how it matches this log of yours - the knots match up - see? -- and these sections of rot match right up -- and see these bug holes? They match up perfectly. -- (SERIOUSLY) Bundy, I reckon you might as well own up to it. We've got a good, clear case of timber trespass on you - and I'm afraid this wood's going to cost you a lot more than if you'd played the game according to the rules and cut it legitimately instead of stealing it.

(FADE OUT)

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